

May 5, 2010

Honorable Julius Genachowski, Chairman  
Commissioner Michael J. Copps  
Commissioner Robert M. McDowell  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Meredith Attwell Baker  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners Copps, McDowell, Clyburn, and Baker,

I am an employee of Sorenson Communications which is a Video Relay Service (VRS) provider. I am writing this letter since I am very worried and am very disturbed to see the Commission's recent Public Notice on VRS rates. These proposals will destroy the VRS industry. My employer has already informed me that if these proposed rates are adopted, our company would go into bankruptcy. This will be very disastrous for the deaf community and especially for myself as an employee.

I am currently a District Manager for Southern Texas and I have a deaf family. Myself, my wife and my 3 young daughters are deaf, too. I own 2 properties in Texas and I pay a large sum of property taxes and federal income taxes. We are law abiding, patriotic and model citizens of our community. In my line of work, I have assisted a very large number of customers to communicate by video phones and it is our life line to connect with the hearing community. VRS is and will always be the greatest invention and accommodation that was made for the deaf people. I respectfully ask you this, how would you feel if your cell phone was taken away from you? VRS is our vital tool to communication as cell phones are to hearing people.

If Sorenson goes into bankruptcy and I lose my job. How can I find a new job with the experience I have earned in the past 18 years? I have been working in the Telecommunications Relay Service industry since 1992. I started with the TTY relay service and moved into VRS as the technology advances. No one I know uses a TTY anymore. Every deaf person I know now uses a video phone and VRS to communicate over the phone. So, if I along with other 6,000 employees of Sorenson loses their job, how can I as a deaf person find a new job? With no job, I will be facing a great danger in losing my home. How can I support my deaf family? My children are very intelligent and are college bound so this is putting a great danger in our future plans to live the American dream. I have

worked so hard for this and please do not take this away from me and my family.

Ensuring that deaf individuals have access to VRS and encouraging improvements in VRS should be a high priority for you as Chairman and Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires the FCC to make available to all deaf individuals nationwide ?functionally-equivalent? communications.

You will soon determine the future of VRS. When you set the VRS rate, you will determine whether America makes progress toward the statutory goals of functional equivalence, nationwide access and inclusion ? or force deaf users to revert to TTY communications. And, you will determine whether VRS fulfills its potential to drive broadband adoption by the deaf, even in the face of poverty and isolation.

The FCC should be increasing the availability and use of VRS, not cutting back. You should adopt a rate that encourages continuing improvements in VRS technology and continues to improve services levels. Recent developments in VRS are a good example of how the service can be improved, such as enhanced 911 services, 10-digit numbering, a larger and better-trained pool of interpreters and better videophones with an array of enhanced features. Monthly payments for broadband are a big expense for many deaf people, and instead of trying to cut back on VRS, you should be exploring ways to make VRS over broadband more affordable to deaf individuals.

Progress towards functional equivalence will be destroyed if the FCC does not encourage VRS providers to improve VRS and make it more widely available. VRS is a recent and dramatic advancement that benefits those who are deaf, but so much more can be done. It would be tragic if the FCC were to destroy this broadband service that is so vital to the deaf.

Recent reports of fraud in the VRS industry are disturbing to employees who work for a company that has operated within current FCC guidelines and has worked to maintain the integrity of the VRS fund. The FCC must devote more of its time and energy to focusing on the elimination of fraud.

I urge you and to establish a fair and predictable rate for VRS that will encourage VRS providers to invest in improving VRS and reaching more deaf individuals. The law requires it and it is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

Robert Giuntoli (Deaf)  
8803 Granada Hills Dr  
Austin, TX 78737

Email: [robert.giuntoli@gmail.com](mailto:robert.giuntoli@gmail.com)